

The Hymn

APRIL 1952



THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY SEAL

Volume 3

Number 2

The President's Message

Twentieth Century American Hymnody will be the emphasis of the 30th Anniversary observance of The Hymn Society during 1952. This will give occasion to honor the men and women who have made their contribution as Americans to the rich body of hymns which are known and loved throughout the English-speaking world. It is natural that the major portion of such hymns should come from the British Isles; but it is inevitable that the vigorous spiritual culture developed on this side of the Atlantic should express itself in hymns which take a rightful place beside the best which the Old World has produced.

The Hymn Society will have a special interest in those authors who have lived during all or part of the thirty years of the Society's life. In addition to the natural chronological factor, this interest springs from the fact that most of these writers have been members of the Society and have participated in its affairs. This relationship has created a privileged fellowship within the Society that has been deeply appreciated by its members. The special interest in these contemporary hymn writers roots also in the realization that many of them have produced their hymns in the general atmosphere which the Society has helped to establish, and some of them under the specific impulses which the Society has initiated.

The distinctive hymnic contribution of America during the twentieth century has been the hymns which voice a social concern. America may well be proud of her leadership in this field. The burning social passion which came into being early in the century produced a wealth of hymns on peace, social justice, and brotherhood. These hymns have found a natural place in the hymn books used in this "century of the common man." Their significance has been intensified by the thirty-eight years of war and near-war which have beset the world since 1914.

This year 1952 thus sets before the Society a pleasant and inspiring task—to bring to public attention the work of twentieth century American hymn writers and to give them fitting honor.

—DEANE EDWARDS

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The Editor's Column

The American Guild of Organists has made a profound contribution to the musical life of America today. Fifty years ago church music was in a rather pathetic state; this fact inspired the then young and vigorous organists to form a Guild which would bring about a much-needed reformation. That this objective was accomplished is a matter of history now.

Many good things have come as the result of the far-seeing founders of the Guild. The granting of academic degrees alone would be worth all the effort which went into its founding. But, thanks to the continuing progressive leadership of the Wardens and leaders of the Guild, there have been great strides in other lines.

Not every organist can or desires to achieve academic degrees. But that does not lessen the need for stimulation and help in their every-day work. To meet such needs President Elmer and the Council have formed a committee under the leadership of James W. Bleecker, with the descriptive title "Members' Interests." The Editor of THE HYMN has been privileged to serve on that committee and to see its work move toward the desired goal of help and concern for the "average" organist.

The Members' Interest Committee, with the close cooperation of Dr. George Mead's Committee on Guild Sunday, has provided a pamphlet with suggestions for the observance of National Guild Sunday, May 4, 1952.

This year marks the eighth annual celebration, and it provides an excellent opportunity for the aspiring organist and choirmaster to present compositions written by contemporary Guild members.

In far too many churches the organist is either taken for granted or is, for many reasons, forced to compromise his innate musical standards to keep his position. Therefore, on Guild Sunday he has a sterling opportunity to present the best of contemporary music to his people in the hope that they will be impressed and will recognize that there is a steady flow of good sacred music from pens of modern writers.

Sadly, there are not many contemporary hymn tunes which could be emphasized. There are quite a few in the *Hymnal* 1940, discussed elsewhere in this issue, but the average church hymnal is barren of good material along that line. There are, however, good free organ accompaniments by Guild composers; some organists might even compose descants to very familiar hymn tunes; and there are many choral preludes based on modern hymn tunes.

We invite and encourage our readers to celebrate Guild Sunday this year; if that is not possible, plan now for next year. Write to the American Guild of Organists, 630 Fifth Avenue, for further information and for copies of Pamphlet Number Two, "National Guild Sunday."

Appraising 20th Century Hymn Tunes

RAY FRANCIS BROWN

HE WHO VENTURES to criticize hymn tunes, especially if he does it for publication, is likely to raise as many questions about the validity of his criticisms as he tries to settle about the quality of the tunes. Some of the questions he will invite, since he is only one fallible man speaking for himself; others will come through an effort to judge the tunes as excellent, acceptable, or inferior. Anything approaching final judgment of the merit of recent tunes must wait for the conclusions of the collective mind, the result of generations. Nevertheless, the individual critic is warranted in an attempt, because, after all, his work is a part of the process by which the collective mind finally reaches its conclusions. Especially is this true if he is willing to do all that he can to base his own judgment on the ability to appreciate objectively the several qualities of the music itself, both in relation to the words and in comparison with other tunes. In the end, he may say, "It is good (more or less)," or "It is bad (more or less)," and give his reasons, as well as on the subjective response in himself which says, "I like it," or "I do not like it."

Objective standards for hymn tune criticism are to be found through study of the great tunes which have come down to us from various times and countries and which are published and available to all of us in such books as *The Yattendon Hymnal* (1900), Oxford University Press; *Hymns Ancient and Modern, Historical Edition* (1909), William Clowes and Sons, London; *Songs of Syon* (1923), Schott and Co., London; *The Oxford Hymn Book* (1925), Oxford Press; *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928), Oxford Press; *The Oxford American Hymnal* (1929), Oxford Press; *Songs of Praise* (1931), Oxford Press; *A Plain-song Hymn Book* (1932), William Clowes and Sons; *The Church Hymnary* (1933), Oxford Press; *The English Hymnal* (1933), Oxford Press; *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941), Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.; *The Hymnal 1940* (1943), The Church Pension Fund, New York; and *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (1950), William Clowes and Sons. These books contain a large number of fine tunes (along with much that is ordinary or inferior, of course), which we may classify according to their various periods and styles as plainsong, folksong, carol tunes, German Chorale tunes, metrical psalm tunes, French Church tunes,

English hymn tunes of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, Welsh tunes, Victorian tunes, American tunes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and modern tunes. It is by comparison with these tunes, after we have come to know them well, that we may appraise the tunes of our own day, looking for equal worth and at the same time finding characteristics which both resemble the best tunes of the past and differ from them.

From our study of these great tunes, taken together with their words, we may derive a set of principles which will help us in making objective judgments, enabling us to see that it is from the combination of many qualities that excellence is determined. These principles may serve also to guide those who write hymn tunes and to deter them from the tendency simply to copy old models, setting a minimum standard, and, at the same time, leaving freedom for the expression of the American ethos.

Some Principles for Judging and Selecting Hymn Tunes

A good and suitable hymn tune should:

1. Express a mood corresponding with that of the words. It should bring out the best in the words.
2. Agree as much as possible in its musical accents with the word accents.
3. Be popular (actually or potentially).
4. Be simple and easy enough for congregational singing.
5. Have a good structure or form (i. e., balance, secured through unity and variety, which makes for durability).
6. Have distinction and beauty in the melody, so that it does not depend on harmony for its main effect.
7. Have diatonic melody, and harmony which is chiefly diatonic.
8. Be harmonized in a style which provides some melodic interest in all of the parts, and which does not use chords and progressions primarily for sentimental or sensational effects.
9. Have melodic range and tessitura suitable for congregational singing. (Normal range: from middle C to second D above; extreme range: from A below middle C to second E above).
10. Have rhythm which is characterized by fluency, vitality, and dignity. The rhythm should not be over-assertive, trivial, or pompous.
11. Not have strong, current secular associations.
12. Be used (other considerations being equal) only with the words with which it has had the longest and widest association.

With these examples and principles in mind, the writer has examined the following seven American hymnals published during the past twenty years, for the purpose of an appraisal of the twentieth century American and Canadian tunes in them:

<i>Hymnal</i>	<i>Publisher</i>	<i>Modern Tunes</i>
<i>At Worship</i> (1951)	Harper & Bros.	14
<i>Hymns for Worship</i> (1947)	Association Press	0
<i>The Hymnal</i> , 1940 (1943)	Church Pension Fund	56
<i>The Lutheran Hymnal</i> (1941)	Concordia Publishing House	7
<i>The Mennonite Hymnary</i> (1940)	Mennonite Book Concern	5
<i>The Methodist Hymnal</i> (1935)	Methodist Book Concern	37
<i>The Presbyterian Hymnal</i> (1933)	Presbyterian Board of Christian Education	13

The Total for these seven books: 132.

Reserving comment for the moment on the 56 tunes in *The Hymnal*, 1940, let us first appraise the 76 tunes which are in the other books. Most of them are written in the style of the Victorian tune, or are in that style mainly, with some resemblance also to the Lowell Mason type, or to the Gospel Song, or to the pre-Victorian English hymn tune; a very few show some characteristics which are what we must call modern, since they do not appear to any marked degree in the older styles. The writer cannot say that any of these tunes may be called excellent; that is, that they are good enough to be ranked with the finest tunes of other times and countries. Some of them are ordinary, "serviceable" tunes, and many are bad tunes.

It is inevitable that the tunes of any period will show the influence of times gone by, especially of the period just preceding. The period just preceding ours was the Victorian, the most characteristic tunes of which appeared during the twenty-five years beginning with 1861, the date of the publication of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. It is unfortunately true of many of our Twentieth century tunes that they are imitations of Victorian tunes without being an improvement over them, but only worse examples of the type.

Because Victorian church music is still accepted uncritically by so many people in our churches, including organists, clergy, and writers of popular books on favorite hymns, it is important for us to view the period in the light and perspective of our own day. The reader can find a good appraisal of the life and music of Victorian times in Chapter Eight of *The Church and Music* by Erik Routley, Gerald Duckworth, London. Speaking there of John Bacchus Dykes, the prolific hymn-tune composer, who was "quintessentially Victorian in his method," he says:

The secret of his style is, of course, the concert-goer's attitude which had infected the Victorian parish church. Hymns were made not to sing, but for the people to listen to choirboys singing. And so the seductive melody and the part-song texture came to the fore. In sum, then, we can describe Victorian church music as "tool-music" in the sense that it is composed with an eye to the "atmosphere" required by the church, and with an eye to the agreeable sensations which it would produce in the ears of the worshippers. It was composed in a self-conscious way which was unknown to the composers of the Puritan psalm-tunes or the music of the Wesleyan revival. Its degradation is due not to the fact that it is supposed to be serving the church but to the fact that in fact it is not serving the church at all but the arbitrary predilections of those who formed the influential membership of the parish churches of England.

Coming as the Victorian tunes did at a time when hymn singing and parish church music generally were at a very low state in the Church of England and when a strong effort was being made to improve them, it should not be surprising that a great many of these tunes, composed as they were to inspire "love at first sight," should have turned out to be very superficial. Many of the tunes were composed for new hymns and for old hymns newly translated. At that time many of the finest tunes which we now have in use were still unknown or unavailable in England, especially Genevan Psalter tunes, French Church tunes, and folk tunes. German Chorales were known but did not become popular. Some of the old tunes used were rhythmically simplified by editors and so made undistinguished and dull.

Victorian music can be explained in part as being an answer to the prevailing mood of the time. Because of the industrial revolution and the great development of the Empire, the greater part of the population of England moved away from the homes of their ancestors to the cities. In their exile they desired some symbol of security, and so music was provided in the churches to help them feel at home. The revivalistic Gospel Song for the "working classes" and the Victorian tune for the gentry, derived as they were from familiar secular music of light character — the one from the music-hall tune and the other from seductive operatic melody and part-song harmony — both gave comfortable feelings to church people. To quote Mr. Routley directly,

"What we are used to"—still in most churches the normal criterion of good music — is identical with the symbol of security, and for the possessing classes no less than for the dispossessed, some

symbol of security was urgently needed. It is the lack of tension, challenge, adventurousness, and judgment in Victorian music which makes it so flaccid, and it is precisely these qualities that made the worshipper cling to it so helplessly.

We may add that the worshipper today still clings to it helplessly, largely because the clergy, church musicians, composers, and hymnbook editors either do not know better themselves, or, lacking courage and imagination, give the people the things they think will please them rather than the things which will help them better to know and to worship God. The Victorian world was very different from our world. In so far as Victorian music was an expression of Victorian life, it is an unfaithful and insincere expression of the life of our own time. Lacking the ageless and universal qualities of great music, Victorian music lacks consonance with the ageless and universal verities in our life, and our continued, complacent use of it is to be accounted for mainly as being simply a bad habit. In our churches, as Robert Bridges said in his *Collected Essays*, xxvi.

We are content with the sort of music which, merging the distinction between sacred and profane, seems designed to make the worldly man feel at home, rather than to reveal to him something of the life beyond his knowledge; compositions full of cheap emotional effects and bad experiments made to be cast aside, the works of purveyors of marketable fashion, always pleased with themselves, and always to be derided by the succeeding generation.

It is true, of course, that congregations cannot and should not be expected suddenly to give up most of their familiar tunes and learn new ones. Even with the best of planning and directing, congregations must needs continue to sing some inferior music, and hymnals must continue to provide them with familiar examples of it. But this observation is beside our main point: that we who compose, edit, select, and administer hymn music should know what is good and should always be ready to help others, especially the young, to know it and to love it. Thus it can be that, after one or two generations, church people may have noble and fitting music associated with the deepest and most sacred experiences of their lives.

It is important that the composition of hymn tunes as well as hymn words should continue. It is good that, in our time and country, something should be added to the store which will be a serious expression of our own best and most characteristic

thought, feeling, and manner. But the publication and use of new tunes should be undertaken with much discrimination.

When one needs a tune for a hymn, the first thing to do is to search among the treasures of the past for something in the right meter and mood. In this way there has been brought into use again many a good tune which was popular in another time and with another tongue but which has been unknown and unavailable in our contemporary use because of the lack of suitable English words. The work of Robert Bridges over fifty years ago in *The Yattendon Hymnal* is our great example — one which has since been followed by other editors and which should still be followed. In this country it is particularly appropriate for us to adapt and use American folk hymn tunes, such as those in the collection *Folk Hymns of America*, edited by Annabel Morris Buchanan. It is needless to say that this should not be done in an antiquarian spirit, since our purpose is not to sing old tunes just because they are old but rather to sing them because of their agless vitality, beauty, and suitability for present use.

Returning now to the appraisal of modern American tunes, let us consider *The Hymnal 1940*, which contains the largest number of modern American (and Canadian) tunes and in this writer's opinion, the largest number of the better tunes. This good showing probably needs no explanation other than that the Episcopal Hymnal Commission, on finding that there were between forty and fifty hymns for which suitable tunes were needed, printed the words for distribution and advertised widely for composers to submit tunes anonymously. Over four thousand were submitted, from which forty-six, or a little over one per cent, were chosen. These tunes, together with ten other modern American and Canadian tunes which had already been published, make up the total of fifty-six in the book. After having known these tunes for about ten years, the writer now ventures to grade them as *excellent*, *acceptable*, and *inferior*. By *excellent* he means that the tunes so graded have beauty and distinction, that they are free from serious faults, and that they may be expected to be of permanent value. The *acceptable* tunes he considers as having merit and usefulness but showing also some fault or lack of distinction. The *inferior* tunes, he feels, might better have been rejected, except for the lack of any better tune for the words. The *excellent* and *acceptable* tunes in the following lists are all dated 1940 or 1941, except as noted.

Excellent

<i>Tune</i>	<i>Number</i>
ASSISI	541
BELLWOODS (1938)	307
CANTICUM REFECTIONIS	525
CHRISTUS REX	206
CONQUEST	543
CURA DEI	248
DEXTER STREET	100
EDSALL	207(1)
GOOD SHEPHERD, ROSEMONT	378
LYNCHBURG	526(2)
MALABAR	201
MAXON	475
MCKEE (1939)	263
PALISADES	365
ST. JOAN	258
STURGES	445
SURSUM CORDA	482
THE KING'S MAJESTY	64

Acceptable

CHELSEA SQUARE	380	
CHICHESTER	429(1)	—This would be classed Excellent for choir use.
GENEVA	145	
GEORGETOWN	437	
KEMPER	490	
KNICKERBOCKER	207(2)	
LABOR	510	
ORA LABORA 1918	576	
ST. DUNSTAN'S 1917	563	
TAYLOR HALL	527	—The fault in this is inherent in the breathless word phrases.
WESTERLY	230	
WOKING	502	

All but one of the tunes classed as *excellent* were written for the words with which they appear in this hymnal, and the acceptance which they will finally have in use will depend partly on the value of the words to which they are set or of others with which they may later be mated. ASSISI is written in simple, chant-like style in order that the long hymn may be sung rather quickly and yet with dignity. CURA DEI, MALABAR, and MAXON have phrases designed for the carrying over of the movement from the

end of one line to the beginning of the next, as required by the sense of the words. BELLWOODS meets the same requirement, although it was written for other words. In CANTICUM REFECTIIONIS the equally measured lines of the 10.10. 10.10. stanzas are varied by the change of rhythm in lines three and four, producing a fine climax on the lengthened repeated notes in line four. The vigor and magnificence of CHRISTUS REX is epitomized in the opening phrase, yet interest is sustained until the strong climax is reached at the beginning of line six—all within the limits of an octave. CONQUEST expresses unusual energy and exaltation, and in its structure it is particularly distinguished by the way that line five integrates with the preceding lines and move on to the thrilling climax at the beginning of line six. The carol-like exuberance of DEXTER STREET is proclaimed in the first line, carried on by the repeated figure and downward leap in the second line, renewed by the upward rush of the third line, and in the fourth line is brought to its climax by the upward leap and to its conclusion by the final repetition of the figure which appeared in lines one and two. EDSALL, for all its simplicity, seems to be unique among all hymn tunes because of the rhythmic figure of repeated notes at the ends of its lines. Double and triple measures are freely alternated in GOOD SHEPHERD, ROSEMOUNT in such a way that no difficulty is made thereby for singers. The lines of LYNCHBURG are subtly varied and unified, and the harmony moves out of the beaten hymn-tune paths in a manner suitable for unison singing. MCKEE is adapted from an older melody to make what seems to be the perfect tune for these words. ST. JOAN is written in an obviously popular style, with well-balanced structure. The simple, well-turned phrases and somewhat modern harmony of STURGES give lovely voice to Richard Baxter's poem. In the unison tune SURSUM CORDA we have a simple and effective variant on the A A B A form. Line two is line one repeated, but reduced in compass a degree and lifted from the lower fifth to the upper fourth of the scale. PALISADES is one of the most modern tunes in the style of its melody and harmony, with all of its parts moving along good vocal lines. THE KING'S MAJESTY, intended for unison singing, is the most definitely modern of these tunes, showing this character in its melody, harmony, and rhythm. Its dramatic feeling, strength, magnificence and pathos give noble expression to the words.

(Continued on Page 63)

Hymnody of the Twentieth Century

RALPH B. NESBITT

A HYMNAL WORTHY of the name represents all the centuries since the birth of Christ. Indeed it reaches far past His birth and includes much of the Old Testament. The phraseology of "Nearer, my God, to Thee" is drawn from the experience of Jacob at Bethel. The closing stanza of Cowper's hymn, "Sometimes a light surprises" is taken directly from Habakkuk. The debt of hymnody to the Psalter is too well known to merit comment. In 1950 we celebrated the 300th Anniversary of The Scottish Psalter and in 1951 the 400th Anniversary of the Genevan Psalter.

The hymnal leans heavily upon the past. It is related also to the present. Each age must interpret Christianity for itself. If religious truth is to have validity it must be first hand. Emphases change. New facets of eternal values come to light. Emerging situations demand different applications of the timeless gospel. The hymnal is therefore of the present as well as of the past. It must voice not only the timeless but also the timely.

Hymnody is thus a continuous and never ending process. Each generation is to add its quota to the accumulation of the centuries. Time tests and sifts the product, separating the wheat from the chaff. A little will finally qualify to become a permanent part of the hymnody of the Church.

While it is too early to state with any assurance the hymns of this century that will survive, we may nevertheless note some that have won large acclaim and are today held in high esteem by Christian people. As this list is far from inclusive I shall appreciate hearing of other hymns which have proven their worth. These might be the basis of a second article.

The emphasis upon youth in the past half century is reflected in a number of hymns. A notable example is "O Son of Man, Our Hero Strong and Tender" by Frank Fletcher, an English layman, who at one time was headmaster of Charterhouse School. The tune, CHARTERHOUSE, is the work of David Evans, a noted Welsh composer. The hymn is also sung to the well loved tune, LONDONDERRY.

The Silver Bay Prize Song, 1920, "To the Knights in the Days of Old" is another favorite hymn of youth. Still another is "We Would Be Building," the prayer of the Christian builders.

The past fifty years have produced at least one notable nature hymn — "This is my Father's World" by Maltbie D. Babcock. Henry van Dyke's fine hymn, "Joyful, Joyful, we Adore Thee," whose dominant note is that of joy, also has many allusions to the world of nature.

The period under consideration has produced a number of hymns in praise of Christ. Here we have "We Bear the Strain of Earthly Care" of Ozora Stearns Davis; "I know not how that Bethlehem's Babe" by Harry Webb Farrington; and Nancy Byrd Turner's, "O Son of Man, Who Walked Each Day."

A hymn of consecration written in 1918, "Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord," has won wide popularity. The author, the Rev. Dr. William Hiram Foulkes, wrote me on May 18, 1950, from Stony Brook, Long Island, regarding this hymn, —

In 1918 we were having a Young People's Conference here. One morning I was going to New York. Calvin Laufer was on the railroad platform; he was humming a tune when I asked him rather facetiously what melody he was humming. He said that it was the tune of a new devotional hymn that he felt we needed. 'I have a tune, Foulkes, but I have no words!' Then as though the idea had just come to him he said, 'Perhaps you can be led to write some words.' 'Maybe I might,' I replied. As I rode into New York that morning, I wrote the first three stanzas; when I returned to Stony Brook that evening we sang the hymn for the first time. It seemed to 'take.' Before long the Board had published the three stanzas and called the tune STONY BROOK. Several years afterward at a Young People's Conference in Blairstown, New Jersey, I wrote the fourth stanza. The Board soon published the hymn with the four stanzas, but changed the name of the tune to HALL to honor William Ralph Hall.

Other devotional hymns include John Oxenham's, "Mid All the traffic of the Ways." The origin of this deeply spiritual hymn is significant. During the second World War — the hymn was written in 1917 — word came that the poet's son had been killed in action. Thereupon Oxenham went into a chapel in London and while there wrote this hymn, which will live, one hopes, for a long time.

God's providence is celebrated in a hymn of the late Hugh Thomson Kerr, who was for many years pastor of the Shady-side Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. The Church celebrated its 50th anniversary in the fall of 1916. Dr. Kerr wrote the

hymn, "God of our Life, Through All the Circling Years," for this occasion. Madame Louise Homer, whose father was an earlier pastor of the Church, was present and led in the singing of "this noble hymn" as she described it.

The general period under consideration has produced a patriotic hymn of distinctive merit, "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies." It should be stated that this hymn is sometimes dated before the turn of the century, in 1893 to be exact, instead of 1904. At all events many would be glad to have this splendid hymn of Katherine Lee Bates become our national anthem. It is worthy of such high honor.

Two world wars in the past half century have influenced the hymns of this era. This influence is found, for instance, in Clifford Bax's poignant hymn, written in 1919, "Turn Back, O Man, Forswear Thy Foolish Ways." The tune is TOULON, adapted from OLD 124TH of the Genevan Psalter. This same influence is manifested also in Ernest Bourner Allen's hymn beginning, "The Son of God Goes Forth to Peace."

In 1911 William Pierson Merrill wrote a hymn which enjoys wide popularity — "Rise up, O Men of God!" This stirring hymn which calls upon men to serve the kingdom also sounds the note of brotherhood. A similar emphasis is found in Oxenham's lines beginning, "In Christ There is no East or West."

Perhaps the most distinctive note in the hymns written in the past half century is that inspired by the so-called social gospel. In 1903 Frank Mason North gave to the world "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life." We catch the same spirit in "O Holy City Seen of John" written by W. Russell Bowie in 1909. We glimpse the same high vision in the closing stanza of "America the Beautiful" —

"O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees, beyond the years,
Thine alabaster cities gleam,
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!"

This is a good note on which to close this article. For nothing testifies more clearly than do these last mentioned hymns to the fact that the spirit of true hymnology is still alive in the hearts of men and of women and in the services of the sanctuary.

Our Neglected Musical Heritage

IRVING LOWENS

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1770 and 1820, an extensive sacred music bearing but little resemblance to the orthodox European psalmody of the time, or to subsequent American psalmody, flourished on New England soil. For half a century, America sang a new song, a crude, striking music not to be heard elsewhere in the world. It was a music full of curiously eloquent melodic turns and strange-sounding harmonic progressions, and despite the fact that it bore a familiar relationship to Anglo-Celtic secular folk song, it was peculiarly American in feeling. Such a tradition-breaking music could have arisen only in America and only in tradition-breaking times; it was *the* music of the newly born republic.

Although but little has as yet been accomplished in the way of a thorough study of its characteristics, most of the primary source materials necessary for the execution of such a project are comparatively easily available. Fortunately, the music is preserved in the pages of hundreds of forgotten American tune books published during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These have never been exhaustively analyzed, and genuine surprises await those curious enough to investigate their content. Uncharted paths must be followed, as existing bibliographical guides are notoriously incomplete and unreliable. In regard to the eighteenth century, at any rate, this situation should be amply corrected when Dr. Allen P. Britton's excellent definitive bibliographical study, now nearing completion, appears.

These tune books, an ubiquitous feature of life in early American times, were not ornamental in function. They were objects of utility, subjected to the hardest sort of wear. Like textbooks, which in one sense they actually were, they were not discarded until they literally fell to pieces. As a natural consequence, some known to have been published in enormous quantities have survived only in handfuls or, in some cases, single copies; others have completely disappeared. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that no single library (with the possible exception of the Library of the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester, Massachusetts) is the possessor of anything like a complete collection. Nevertheless, excellent representative collections may be found in almost all large American research centers and in not a few

smaller ones, with the greatest wealth of materials concentrated in New England. Some, such as the Warrington Collection at the Hartford Theological Seminary, are still unknown quantities, although they are known to be huge.

Perhaps one of the most satisfactory methods of suggesting some of the problem areas in need of study is through an overview of the sociological implications and general musical content of the American tune books of the period. These are conspicuously identifiable as members of a class because of the characteristic oblong format in which they were almost invariably issued, a format which gave rise to the generic colloquial terms "longboy" and "end-opener" by which they are frequently called. Resemblances are not, however, confined to mere physical externals; in most cases, a more or less uniform method of presenting the content was adopted. With some variation, the typical tune book was usually made up of some mixture of the following elements:

1. a title page, often containing much miscellaneous information, composed in the best (or worst) tradition of complex eighteenth century typography;
2. a prefatory statement or "advertisement," in which the compiler sets forth the reasons which impelled him to assemble the book;
3. some form of presentation of the rudiments of music, designed to initiate the novice into the intricacies of musical notation and elementary theory, with general observations on good singing practices;
4. a number of short psalm or hymn tunes, either of the compiler's own composition, or borrowed from his friends or other American or English collections;
5. a few longer compositions, generally in anthem form, designed as show pieces;
6. an index to the whole.

It is immediately evident that we are here dealing with something quite different in character from the contemporary church hymn book. These were clearly not mere collections of tunes to be sung by congregation or choir during church services. What was the function of the invariably included presentation of the "grounds and rules of music?" Inevitably we are led to the somewhat startling conclusion that these collections of sacred music were designed to serve a simple secular purpose, that of supplying materials for the New England "singing school," a social institution which has long since vanished from the earth.

In America, the singing school came into existence in consequence of a drastic change in the performance of church music which took place during the second or third decade of the eighteenth century. At that time, after a most bitter controversy, singing in "the old way," that is, singing by rote in a traditional manner, began to be supplanted by "the new way," that is, by note, actually reading from the printed page. As the art of reading music notation was far from universal, the ministers who urged the reform established singing schools in order to bring this knowledge to the people. They were generally of a few weeks' duration, were held during the winter months, and were taught by itinerant singing masters who moved perpetually from village to village. The first American "end-opener," *The Grounds and Rules of Musick* compiled by the Rev. Thomas Walter of Roxbury in 1721, was actually a textbook; the tunes he included (borrowed from Playford) were a sort of appendix, being practice materials for the use of classes. In the early years, the integral connection between the church and the singing school resulted in the utilization of exclusively sacred texts for the tunes, but in later years, when the singing school had become firmly established as a social institution in its own right, frankly secular texts found their way into the tune books. These always remained a small number, it is true, but they were nevertheless indubitably present in many collections after 1770.

Not all the reasons for the rapid growth of the singing school movement were purely musical or religious. Approved amusements for young people were few and far between during the eighteenth century, and the singing school served as the youth club, the social center of the period. In New England towns, attendance was all but universal. The camaraderie, the opportunities for flirtation, the furtively exchanged notes, the long walks home were in all probability drawing features as attractive as the joys of learning to sing and singing together. The itinerant singing masters of the day had their troubles in coping with such purely secular manifestations, as is apparent from the rules for proper deportment in singing schools often included in the tune books.

The singing schools, an ever-increasing band, proved to be an almost insatiable market for new music. It is hardly surprising, in view of their social function and composition, that they welcomed with enthusiasm a new *sort* of music. Patriotic motives

and the difficulty of importing music from England probably helped to open the floodgates of the American psalmody at that particular moment; at any rate, in 1770, William Billings' *The New-England Psalm-Singer* ushered in the era of the American idiom.

The salient melodic features of the native American style included the predominant use of so-called gapped scales, aeolian coloring, with occasional touches of dorian in the minor, and a clearly modal rather than diatonic general tendency. Rhythmically, American tunes were characterized by greater variety and virility than their European counterparts; formally, by greater irregularity of phrase; harmonically, by certain progressions that appear crude at first glance, but which were used so frequently that they must be considered stylistic features rather than errors. It is evident that many of these same traits are found in Anglo-Celtic folk music, and it appears likely that this body of song, rather than any art music, was the determining factor in the development of the American idiom. Folk song must have been present, perhaps subconsciously, at the time although written evidence to that effect has not yet been uncovered.

Despite the fact that William Billings was the first composer in whom elements of this style can be found, it should not be inferred that his music was typical of the idiom. His antecedents in English psalmody are all too obvious, and the music he wrote owes its attractiveness more to his unique genius than to any specifically native style. He was a forerunner rather than a culmination; his tunes represent a cross between the old and the new. During the period, he stood alone — he was inimitably Billings. It was not until the following decade that the American idiom appeared in pure form. Its propagators were a group of composers and tune book compilers, most of them singing masters, geographically centered in Connecticut and including such comparatively unfamiliar names as Read, Brownson, Jocelin, Morgan, Swan, Edson, Benham, Jenks and many others. The new music blossomed very shortly afterwards in central Massachusetts, where French, Wood, Stone, Belknap, Mann, Janes and others were active. It spread to cosmopolitan Boston where a more sophisticated group of composer-compilers flourished; Holden, Holyoke, Kimball, Brown, Holt, Mitchell and lesser figures were influenced, to some extent, by European practices. In Maine and New Hampshire, Belcher, Maxim, West and Ingalls carried on in the native

tradition. Everywhere, during the 1780's and 1790's the American idiom reigned supreme.

If any particular musical form can be termed the hallmark of the idiom, the "fuguing tune" must be considered such. This was a simple contrapuntal extension of the psalm tune, with no relationship to the instrumental European "fugue," adapted by Billings from English models and developed by the Connecticut group to a unique expressiveness. Its popularity was phenomenal. Its importance in the history of American music can only be hinted at here; for a full discussion, the reader must be referred to the author's forthcoming study of the form, where it is dealt with *in extenso*.

The universal appeal of the American idiom was so great that it all but supplanted the more dignified but less exciting orthodox psalmody in the churches themselves, a situation which was shortly to provoke a strong reaction. Rumblings of discontent were occasionally heard as early as the last decade of the eighteenth century, but shortly after the turn of the nineteenth, a storm of protest burst in full fury. The clergy fiercely attacked its secular origins and its lively rhythms, questioning its appropriateness in the church. Musicians, increasingly cognizant of the main stream of the European musical tradition, assailed it as illiterate. Gradually, the American tunes were supplanted by English imports stamped with the *imprimatur* of respectability. The tune books, sensitive to the musical climate, changed in character. By the time Lowell Mason appeared on the scene around 1820, the adherents of the indigenous style were in full retreat.

With the help of William Gardiner's *Sacred Melodies*, an English collection in which the new technique of using snippets of tunes from the great European masters was fully exploited, Mason administered the *coup de grâce* to the American idiom in the urban North. He was further aided by the retrogression of the singing school tide; the old institution was fast disappearing in the cities. Rural areas, slower to reflect change, clung to the old music for some time to come, but in Boston the polished inconsequentialities of the *Handel and Haydn Society Collection* dictated the trend.

At just about the same time as its popular appeal in the cities began to wane, the American idiom sent forth one of its most interesting offshoots. Under the impetus of the great revival of 1800 a new and equally "disreputable" sacred music made its

appearance in printed form. This frank combination of secular folk tune and sacred text, this spiritual folk song, as it has been termed by Dr. George Pullen Jackson, was stylistically identical with the old composed American music, and within a short period of time, the two had merged forces. Together, they migrated to the south and west, following well beaten emigrant paths from Philadelphia to Harrisburg to Pittsburg, thence to Virginia, into the territories of Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri and Ohio. Singing masters such as Chapin and Munson traveled from pioneer settlement to pioneer settlement, and the singing school took a new lease on life in frontier areas. New composer-compilers in the old tradition sprang up: Davisson, Carden, Carrell, Funk, Walker, White, King and many others propagandized for the old music and wrote new, using the old techniques. In the south, the tradition has survived until today, and in out-of-the-way places, the music is still sung and written in much the same manner as it was in New England nearly a century and a half ago.

All too little is known about the history and nature of this peculiarly American psalmody outlined above; our customarily disdainful attitude towards it seems to be a direct inheritance from that of the early nineteenth century. The "standard" judgments originally promulgated by exponents of orthodox psalmody at that time have been accepted, by and large, by subsequent generations without question. To us it appears that the American idiom was poetry in an unknown tongue to the nineteenth century arbiters of musical taste. Some bitterly attacked it for both musical and non-musical reasons, stigmatizing the output of an entire era as worthless trash, puerile and insignificant.

The modern scholar cannot agree; the music tells a different story. Some indubitably poor tunes were current, but an astonishingly large number seem to have been of greater intrinsic merit and were far more expressive than most of the overrated psalm tunes then being imported from Europe. If the tunes in the American idiom possessed no other virtue, they were certainly alive musically, unsophisticated and untrammelled by the "laws of musical science" which reduced much of orthodox psalmody to the dead level of mediocrity. On extra-musical grounds, particularly in regard to the question of "appropriateness" for use in the church, criticism was undoubtedly justified to some extent—at that time.

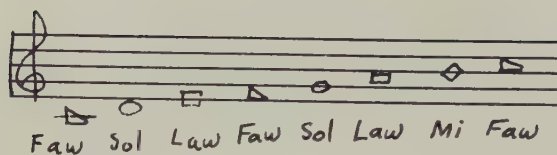
It should be clear that the nineteenth century musical analysis of the American idiom is completely invalid today. The judgments of such men as Thomas Hastings and Lowell Mason were based on a conception of the nature of music which was characteristic of their time. They postulated certain immutable "laws of musical science," the observation of which supposedly resulted in artistic achievement. Ignorance of the laws was no excuse; those who transgressed wrote "incorrect" and therefore "bad" music. In truth, if one accepts the premise, the conclusion is inescapable. To us, such a conception may appear fallacious in the extreme, but to the nineteenth century mind regarding music as a "scientific art," it was quite convincing. This philosophical tenet, implicit in nearly all music criticism of the period, explains much of its dogmatism and error. It would, of course, be gross oversimplification to condemn the nineteenth century for lack of critical acumen; the thinking of those who shaped its ideologies makes perfectly good sense in its historical setting; it does not, however, have any contemporary pertinence. The music itself must serve us as the basis for acceptable judgments.

The matter of "appropriateness" also merits re-examination. The church has broadened its horizons considerably since the last century. New life was infused into English psalmody with the rediscovery of its national folk song at the turn of the twentieth century; the noteworthy achievements of *The English Hymnal* and *Songs of Praise* are eloquent testimony to the fructifying influence of folk music in church song. The untapped treasure house of early American psalmody, so closely allied with folk music, is potentially an unparalleled means for the revitalization of American congregational song. To some extent, a trend in this direction is becoming evident; it is of some significance that a number of spiritual folk songs in modern modal harmonizations have been incorporated into the Episcopal *Hymnal* 1940. daring attempt to reintegrate a segment of early American psalm-

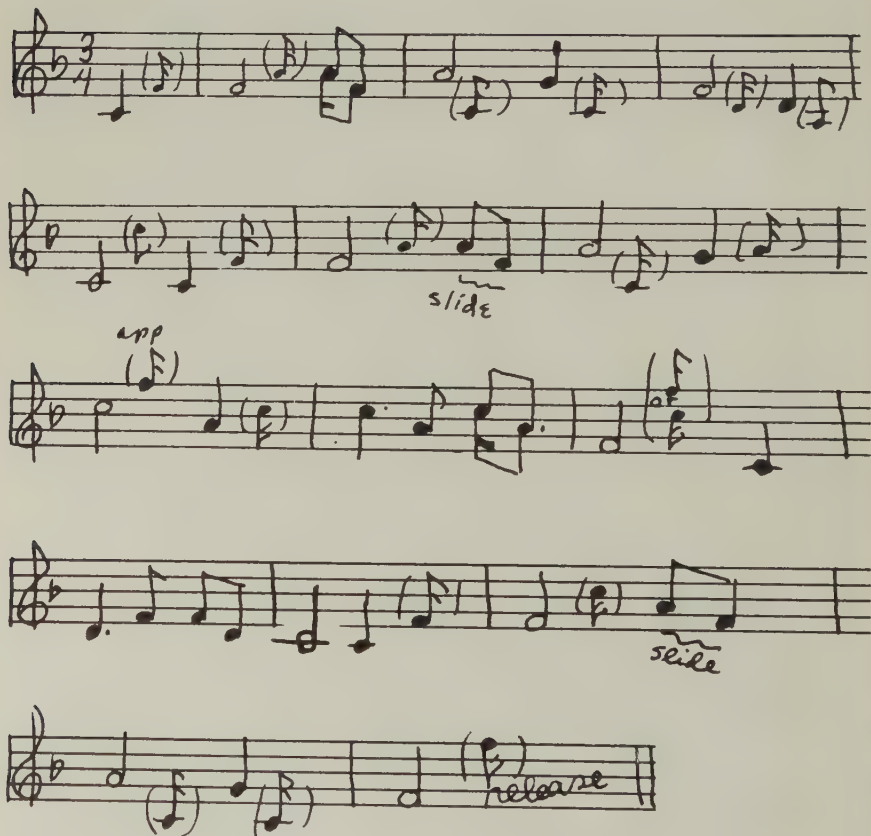
The role of the progressive church in today's social organism embraces many aspects of secular life; it no longer shuns liveliness, enthusiasm, color, and the joys of the secular world as did the nineteenth century house of worship. In such a church, these tunes, expressive and strong, should be welcome.

Discoveries are waiting to be made; the field is literally wide open to the creative scholar, the musicologist, the hymnologist with vision.

I



II



ILLUSTRATIONS REFERRED TO IN MR. LOVELACE'S ARTICLE

Early Sacred Folk Music in America

AUSTIN C. LOVELACE

(continued from the January HYMN)

FOLLOWING THE REVIVAL ERA in America the churches tended to become more institutionalized. In place of the dissenting groups with their zeal there was a tendency toward unity among many churches. Perhaps the revulsion against excess emotionalism as characterized by the revival meeting and its revival songs has clouded our view of the sacred ballads and sacred folk hymns, which, with revival songs, make up the three classes of sacred folk music. According to Jackson's classification, his 550 tunes are divided into 111 religious ballads, 250 folk hymns, and 189 revival songs. Such a large body of material obviously needs careful evaluation and study.

Notational System and Arrangement of Music

Concerning the notational system and the arrangement of the music, it should be recalled that the early hymnals, such as Walker's *Southern Harmony*, were printed in the "faw, sol, law" notation or four shaped note system. (See Illustration I) Later, most hymnals adopted the seven shaped note system, a method employing seven different shaped notes, one for each syllable of the scale. Many churches in the South still sing from shaped note books. Indeed, the Southern Baptist Church still issues its hymnals in both shaped and round notes.

Another familiar feature of these folk hymnals was the arrangement of the music, generally on three lines and in later books, four. The bottom line was always the bass, the second, the tenor where the melody is found, unless "Air" is written at the beginning of the top line, and the top line or treble. In some of the early books only two lines of music were included, bass and air. The harmony is rough and ready and shows a lack of skill, although each line does have some melodic variety, a feature referred to by William Hauser as "southernizing" the tune. (*Hesperian Harp*, p. 347) Whatever violence was done to the harmony by dressing up the tunes was looked upon as unimportant. To sing these hymns today in their original arrangements would give a distorted view but when these airs are sung alone they often appear as gems of melodic beauty.

One of the reasons for the arrangement of the music on separate lines is to be found in the background of the "singing schools" which were held in churches throughout the South. A "singing master" or "singing teacher," armed with copies of his favorite book, often of his own editing, went from place to place to hold a singing class. Each book contained a section of "Rudiments" which served as a theory book; of course, the sight-reading was taught by associating each degree of the scale with a particular shape of note. The material for practice was found in the hymnal where the separate lines made it easier to teach part singing. It must be admitted that the method was effective and many fine readers were developed. My mother was taught by this method and can still sing at sight any music on shaped notes.

Ornamentation

Frequent ornamentation also characterized the notation of these folk hymns, resulting in a vocal production full of stylistic flourishes, like old handwriting. A very noticeable one is the tendency of the voice, usually the tenor, to flip up momentarily on its transition from one long tone to another lower one to a falsetto grace note much higher than either note of the melody proper. Again, at the end of a phrase there is often a falsetto jump to a high note approximately an octave above, at the release. Scoops and slides are common in singing large or small intervals; notes are often anticipated vocally; a hook-like progression is often heard between two notes as if the singer's voice had dropped to some tonal center below. This type of ornamentation is shown, approximately, in the illustration of the song, "Amazing Grace," as I have heard it sung in many rural churches in the Sandy Run Baptist Association, in Rutherford County, North Carolina. Large notes are the printed framework of the melody. The tempo is very slow and deliberate. (See Illustration II)

A very striking transcript of a recording made of the tune PISGAH, showing all the decorations, which practically hide the tune, may be found in George P. Jackson's volume, *White and Negro Spirituals*. That the early collectors and compilers were aware of these furbelows and tried to incorporate them in their printed versions is evident from examining certain of the early hymnals. (See J. H. Hickok, *Sacred Harp* 1832?, pp. 51, 53; W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, pp. 3, 7.) It is evident that melodies

might vary in many respects in different hymnals, changing with the local tradition of singing the tune, although the general framework remained fairly constant.

Modal Character

When we turn to the modal character of many of the tunes we find further indications that modes could be and were changed in different areas, by different singers, for different stanzas, and under various circumstances. One of the most startling changes is in the hymn, "THE PROMISED LAND," as printed in Walker's *Southern Harmony*. (See January HYMN, p. 10) While I have heard the minor version sung, I have also found the mode changed to major with the key signature actually becoming that of F major. Such radical changes of mode are not common, but are indicative of the freedom with which modes might be varied, often within one song or from stanza to stanza.

In attempting to classify the folk song material into modes, Jackson adopted a chart by Hilton Rufty which takes into account two specific problems: the type of scale and the arrangement of intervals. In these folk hymns, as in many other types of folk music, there is a tendency toward the use of gapped scales. Of 283 classifiable songs collected in *Down East Spirituals*, 25 per cent are pentatonic, 40 per cent hexatonic, and 35 per cent heptatonic.

While such a system is helpful in analyzing and cataloguing the tunes, it does not explain the character of every tune. The modes as used are really "mode" (mood) music which, as suggested above, singers felt free to change at will. Oftentimes the singers either added or subtracted notes from the scale pattern and thus confused the issue. However, there seems to be a strong tendency to avoid the use of the fourth and seventh scale degrees. Mrs. Annabel M. Buchanan has felt the need for adding an extra mode called the *neutral mode* to cover cases where neither the flat, raised seventh, major nor minor third is clear. She refers to the practice of folk singers "coloring" the intervals to suit the words, often using even temperament, by splitting the perfect fifth, thus giving a neutral third. (See "A Neutral Mode," bibliography below.) This partially accounts for the confusion of many investigators who had had difficulty in determining the correct notation and hence the mode. Continuing investigation along this line will depend upon further study of recordings and

careful measurement of intervals. At any rate, the modal nature of the tunes, particularly in the South, is one of the chief characteristics of this music.

Freedom of Meter

Another characteristic, pointed out by several investigators, is freedom in the use of meter. Great liberties are taken in adding extra beats for breathing and for making a melody more "expressive." Mrs. Buchanan cites the "Garden Hymn" in which the meter varies between $9/4$ and $6/4$. (See *Folk Hymns of America*.) The same hymn appears in *Southern Harmony* in $6/8$ meter.

The causes for all these variations are suggested by Cecil Sharp as follows: 1) greater attention to words than music, with unconscious variations in the tune; 2) the love for ornamentation; 3) the substitution of corrupt and unmetrical lines for forgotten words, disturbing the musical line as it is adapted to new material; 4) the adaptation of an old tune to new words of a slightly different meter, the music undergoing a change; 5) the change of mode (mood). (See *English Folk-Songs — Some Conclusions*, 1907)

The changes are sometimes radical but often slight. In the long run a general pattern or form evolves which has the widest appeal. This accounts in part for the many variants of the same tune to be found in widely scattered areas in the favorite hymnals of the era 1810 to 1840.

Melodic Characteristics

The general patterns of musical form or structure to be found in this body of melody (for it is essentially monody), have been described by Phillips Barry thus: 1) the circular type of melody, that is, a melody which does not end upon the tonic but upon the fifth, creating the feeling that the melody must begin again, this time with another stanza; 2) a strong tendency for partial melodies, that is, two elements (AB, ABBA or AAA'B), three elements (AA'BC, ABAC, ABB'C), four or more elements (ABCD, ABACDE, ABCDEFGD); 3) nationalistic characteristics, for example, the Irish love for the ABB'A and ABB'C forms, and also a final cadence which consists of the repetition of the final note. ("Folk Music," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, XXII (1909), Jan.-Mar., 72-81). This field needs further exploration

as an approach to the problem of tracing folk tune sources and derivations.

Other melodic characteristics pointed out by Jackson, Buchanan and others are 1) the wide range of the melodic line; 2) the frequent use of the tonic for the first accented notes; 3) the use of the rising fourth as the introductory interval; 4) conservative use of materials, for example, in cases of the pentatonic scale; 5) use of small intervals up to the fifth, larger intervals being found usually at the juncture of two phrases; 6) falling cadences to the tonic; 7) the rare use of a true minor mode in the modern sense; 8) few modulations; 9) the non-harmonic nature of the melody, due to non-harmonic passing tones; 10) vagueness of tonality; 11) frequent use of flatted or neutral seventh in cadences.

Mention should be made of the seemingly endless repetition of melodic material, so characteristic of true folk music where a motive is used and re-used till it sinks into the singer's consciousness and becomes fixed and unforgettable. There is little development of a theme, merely repetition with such small alterations as are necessary in the opening formula or in the cadence. In the case of the revival hymn there is nothing but repetition.

Conclusion

The underlying principle of the folk hymn is simplicity, — simplicity of scale, tonality, intervals, range, motive, framework, form, extent, development, melodic devices and rhythm. All are eminently singable and expressive. Some are worthy additions to hymnic music.

Of the three types listed in the introductory paragraph of this installment, the revival song type is the least desirable from the musical viewpoint. Unfortunately, this is the type which is known by most church musicians whose understandable revulsion to it has obscured any proper view of the sacred ballads and folk hymns which make up the bulk of the material. The ballad type of melody does not greatly differ from the folk hymn type and there are probably many fine examples existing in both groups to be studied and evaluated. To make the most of them, two procedures are suggested: the re-harmonization of the tunes to replace the older crude and elementary forms, with a proper modal treatment; and the setting of the tunes to new and more modern texts. There should be no objection to changing the words, for

in most cases, these tunes were sung to several texts, sometimes secular. Theological ideas have changed with the times and the mere revival of the hymn tunes with their original texts will certainly help to bury them very quickly. The value lies in the simple folk-like melodies and as such should be as welcome to American hymnic development as the folk music of Germany was to the Reformation.

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"Appraising 20th Century Hymn Tunes"

(Continued from Page 44)

The distinction which every good tune must have is a quality like the individuality of a person. The quality can never be fully described because knowledge and love are necessary for its appreciation, although analysis and comparison are a help in making the quality known. The foregoing comments on the tunes are intended to bring out the character of each tune as it appeals to the writer, but they are not complete, even as analysis. An application in detail of the previously enumerated principles for judging and selecting hymn tunes, and a careful comparison of these tunes with older ones of respectable worth would be beyond the proper scope of this article, although the writer has borne in mind the principles and comparisons as he has reached his present conclusions.

So the matter rests today; but tomorrow, judging by the fact that his past conclusions have altered from time to time as the result of continuing thought and discussion, he may still change his mind.

Notes from the Executive Secretary

DR. H. AUGUSTINE SMITH, died on March 17, 1952, at the age of 77 in Newton, Mass. He first joined our Society the year after its founding, 1923. Born in Naperville, Illinois, he completed his musical study at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music. He began his career as tenor soloist with the Minneapolis and New York Symphony orchestras. He later held professorships in Chicago, and then came to Boston University to be professor of church music. He founded the Boston University Choral Art Society, an a capella group, made up of students. He travelled with this and other choral societies across the country for many years. Dr. Smith was the compiler of eight hymn books, the best known of which are *The New Church Hymnal* and *The New Hymnal for American Youth*, the former having a total printing of more than two million copies.

Dr. Smith's name was associated with religious drama and he organized and directed pageants for large audiences and various conventions. He is known best to hymn lovers for his book *Lyric Religion*, a study in the appreciation of our best known hymns and tunes.

His teaching scheduled at Boston University was restricted in recent years, but he continued his choral work; he took the choir on extended trips until 1950. We last saw him in his home more than two years ago when he looked over the manuscripts for Paper XVI of the Society. He gave many valuable comments based on his experiences in holding mass hymn festivals, particularly mentioning the Christian Endeavor Convention in Japan.

What a strange coincidence that only three days after word came of the passing of Dr. Smith, we learned that DR. HOWARD CHANDLER ROBBINS passed away on March 20th, in Washington. Dean Robbins was associated with Dr. Smith in *The New Church Hymnal project*; in that book appeared Dean Robbins' well-known lyric "Put forth, O God, Thy Spirit's Might."

Howard Chandler Robbins was born in Philadelphia in 1876, graduated at Yale in 1896, with the honor of being class Poet. He then attended the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, Mass., and after serving churches at Morristown and Englewood, New Jersey, he came to the Church of the Incarnation in New York. From 1917 until 1929 he was Dean of the Cathedral of St. John The Divine. Afterwards he became professor of pastoral theology at General Theological Seminary, a post he held until 1941; for the next two years he was visiting preacher at St. John's Church, Washington. In 1944 he retired from the active ministry.

Dean Robbins was a persuasive and magnetic preacher, and always exalted the gift of "prophetic preaching." He was concerned with the church's stand on the questions of the day, and was considered a leader

of its liberal wing. He was the author of several books of sermons, devotional readings and biography.

Dr. Robbins was an active member of the Commission on Religion and Health of the Federal Council of Churches, and was a charter member of its Commission on Worship. He edited for the latter a valuable pamphlet on "Ecumenical Trends in Hymnody." He was well known as a hymn writer; five original hymns and one translation from his pen appear in the most recent Episcopal Hymnal; and he was also a member of the Commission which prepared that book.

At The Hymn Society's tenth anniversary in 1932 he was the preacher for the public service at St. Bartholomew's Church; he was President of the Society from 1933 to 1935.

Dean Robbins was honored as a great Christian citizen as well as a leader in his own Communion. We are specially grateful for his keen interest in hymns, and his vital contribution to the hymnic life of the church through many years.

THE CHURCH MUSIC FOUNDATION may well be called the elongated shadow of its genial founder, Paul Swarm, of Decatur, Illinois. Mr. Swarm is an active member of The Hymn Society, and during the past decade has been concerned about the low estate of the music in numberless American churches. Out of his concern grew a cleverly planned survey of the situation across the country, including churches of all denominations, and his conclusions were based on an enormous number of returns.

Mr. Swarm then started to issue informative material along very practical lines, covering various aspects of the organization and performance of church music. He called it "Guideposts for the Church Musician." It was arranged in loose-leaf form, and subscribers received new data from time to time.

In addition to the provision of high-grade printed matter the Church Music Foundation has commenced to sponsor Conference Workshops. In these conferences Mr. Swarm and his associates cover the musicianship of the organist, as shown in his improvisation and modulation; rehearsal technique and service playing; handling the choir; and maintaining interest in the musical life of the church. In addition there are compact exhibits of a few carefully selected organ and choral compositions. Personal consultations are encouraged and coaching is offered in improvisation during the service.

One of the largest of these Workshops organized by C. M. F. was held in conjunction with the New York City Chapter of the A. G. O. on February 25th. In the session on improvisation and modulation, credit was given to Dr. Frederick Schlieder for the material used, and he himself gave an excellent address in the afternoon. Emphasis was laid on *thinking*

musical sequences and daring to express them at the piano without hesitation.

We are happy to report that the importance of hymns was stressed frequently, with hints for their interpretation. Mr. Swarm demonstrated his sympathetic understanding of the importance of hymns in worship.

There was a stimulating survey of choral publications of 1951, three of which were read and sung. Anthems within the capacity of volunteer and high school choirs were read and sung. The use of choir hymns was strongly urged.

The evening session, with more than 250 people present, was devoted to relationships with the choir. Mr. Swarm approached the topic by discussing in arresting fashion the personality factors in leadership. Under the title "Fourteen ways of maintaining choir interest" he covered the elements of training, promotion, preparation for and principles of holding rehearsals, and of stimulating loyalty and earnest work by the singers.

These "ways" were keyed by page references to Guideposts, and by mention of numerous other books and pamphlets. Completeness of devotion was stressed; the elements of complete consecration, of vivid projection of personality and of willingness to regard necessary preparation seriously, were all stressed, and are at the center of success. We were happy to hear Mr. Swarm assert that the vigor of hymn singing depends on the musical vitality and experience of the choir director and organist.

The whole day made a profound impression. Such worship workshops are being set up in large centers all over the country. Thousands of organists who cannot attend a summer institute or school of sacred music will find them what they need, and until they can attend one of the workshops, they will do well to spend some time studying Guideposts. A friend recently told me that his work with Guideposts had relieved his feelings of musical inadequacy and loneliness. Many an organist suffers on both scores.

RALPH H. BRIGHAM, a long-time member of the Society, and a friend of its founder, recently played his 900th Organ Recital at the Second Congregational Church, Rockford, Illinois. It is customary for Mr. Brigham to play a half-hour Recital every Sunday morning before the Service. Mr. Brigham is a valued member of the Society, a Contributing Editor of THE HYMN, and has done much to promote the improvement of congregational hymn singing and interest through the use of choral preludes and other compositions based on hymn tunes. REGINALD L. MCALI

AMONG OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Ray Francis Brown is on the faculty of General Theological Seminary, New York, and is organist at the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection.

. . . Ralph B. Nesbitt is an associate minister of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York. . . . Irving Lowens is a musicologist in Baltimore, Md., and is writing an extensive study of American "fuguing tunes."

The Hymn Society of America

FOUNDED 1922 INCORPORATED 1938

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